

## **MEETING SUMMARY: TRUCKING ADVISORY COUNCIL**

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### **Meeting Time and Location**

The first Trucking Advisory Council meeting for the *Louisiana Statewide Transportation Plan Update* was held on April 18, 2001 at the Marriott Hotel in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

### **Meeting Attendees**

The following persons attended the meeting:

#### **Advisory Council Members/Representatives**

- ❑ Glen Guillot, President, LMTA (representing Randy Guillot)

#### **Non-Member DOTD Staff**

- ❑ Bobby Hennigan, DOTD
- ❑ Nick Verret, DOTD
- ❑ Bruce Easterly, DOTD
- ❑ Denny Silvio, DOTD

#### **Consultant Team Members**

- ❑ Rob Hebert, Wilbur Smith Associates (Presenter/Facilitator)
- ❑ Butch Babineaux, Wilbur Smith Associates
- ❑ Dale Janik, Wilbur Smith Associates
- ❑ Scott Sanders, Wilbur Smith Associates
- ❑ Mike Maynard, Wilbur Smith Associates
- ❑ Jim Amdal, University of New Orleans
- ❑ Mike Heath, Alliance Transportation Group
- ❑ J.D. Allen, Alliance Transportation Group

#### **Others**

- ❑ Huey Dugas, CRPC
- ❑ Virgil Page, FHWA
- ❑ Bruce Lambert, FHWA
- ❑ Robert Shaw, International Paper
- ❑ John Grafton, England Airpark
- ❑ Karen Parson, RPC

### **Meeting Purpose**

The purpose of this meeting was to provide Advisory Council members with an overview of the Plan Update, a review of trucking related elements discussed at the first Statewide Transportation Conference held in New Orleans on July 31-August 1, 2000, and to discuss strategic issues and suggested changes to the overall goals and objectives included in the 1996 *Statewide Intermodal Transportation Plan (SITP)*.

### **Summary of Meeting Comments**

Important items discussed at the meeting are summarized as follows:

- ❑ All trucks should be treated with consistency and uniformity in related fees and regulations. Trucking industry will not consider supporting any truck fee increases until all trucks are treated equally. Existing truck user fees and taxes must be dedicated to transportation infrastructure maintenance and renewal before any new taxes or fees will be supported.
- ❑ Truck registration fees should not go into State's General Fund but rather in the Transportation Trust Fund where they can be appropriately used for highway improvements.
- ❑ Commerce such as larger distribution centers should be developed along I-10 to encourage "through" trucks to stop in Louisiana.
- ❑ Profit margins in the trucking industry are small. Additional trucking costs will put smaller trucking companies out of business or encourage them to register in other states.
- ❑ Truck stops and rest areas are not adequate in Louisiana. Trucks have been seen parking on ramps at night because of the inadequate number of parking spaces at truck stops/rest areas. The grassy areas at highway interchanges should be converted to truck parking and staging facilities.
- ❑ DOTD is in the process of closing rest areas and adding additional truck parking spaces at those that will remain open.
- ❑ Trucks should be encouraged to use other state corridors such as I-49 to reduce congestion along I-10 and I-12. However, the I-49 corridor should be planned correctly with appropriate restrictions on adjacent development and well designed trucking facilities. Central Louisiana should be a logical trucking point.
- ❑ There are several examples of poor planning in regards to inadequate access to Ports and other freight facilities, as well as incompatible land uses located next to truck facilities in the state.
- ❑ Guide signage to trucking destinations are inadequate throughout the state, including truck stops, port facilities, major freight terminals, etc. (especially for out-of-state truckers). Improved guide signage as well as brochures/maps and kiosks with printout capabilities at truck stops/rest areas should be considered.

- ❑ The state's highway infrastructure is not adequately designed for accommodating trucks. The State should consider higher design standards and possibly traffic impact fees for trucking related development.
- ❑ At this time, DOTD only has authority to approve driveway locations on state highways.
- ❑ The important issue of transportation/land use interrelationships should be addressed in a separate goal or incorporated into one or more existing goals.
- ❑ More should be done in the area of driver training/education related to truck operations, especially for young drivers.
- ❑ The last sentence in goal 7 should be eliminated.
- ❑ Better utilization of the existing transportation system should be addressed in a study goal.
- ❑ Bruce Lambert, FHWA Office of Freight Management and Operations, gave a presentation on existing and future freight congestion throughout the nation, which will be a major component in the next transportation bill.